Vol. 6 No. 6

National Congress Bulletin

NATIONAL CONGRESS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS
1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

FEBRUARY, 1939

ANNOUNCEMENT

THE Executive Committee of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers at its recent meeting in Cincinnati voted to present in this issue of the "Bulletin" the following statement which is of the utmost importance to our 27,000 local associations and our more than 2,000,000 members:

The parent-teacher movement as a *national* movement started in Washington, D. C., 42 years ago, and since that time the National Congress of Parents and Teachers has maintained its office in Washington. From the first, the organization of local units directly under the National Congress was the chief concern. The subsequent establishment of state branches greatly stimulated the growth of membership and changed somewhat the function of the National Office.

The organization through the years has spread south and west, and today we have on the west coast alone a parent-teacher membership of approximately one-third of a million who are nearly 3,000 miles distant from the Washington office.

The change in the distribution of members and the increase in membership have created new demands. The type of service which the office is now called upon to render has changed and enlarged in consequence. Today this larger service includes the preparation and distribution of Congress publications and other materials, the routing of field service from the office staff, as well as a personal service to all who have opportunity to visit the National Office.

The changes that have come about in the office are but a reflection of the changes that have come about in the nation at large since our organization in 1897. The great westward expansion has opened up new centers of population and transportation. Under new postal regulations following the establishment of the U. S. Parcel Post System, postal zones have been set up which affect both the time and the cost of transportation of mail.

The expansion and different distribution of our membership; the types of service now required from the office; and the changes in the country itself have brought about great inequalities in the service rendered to our membership which can be overcome only by a relocation of our National Office. The location of the office, entirely off center as at present, has become either a limiting factor in the choice of officers of the Congress or else an unnecessarily heavy burden on all except leaders in the extreme east.

To overcome this difficulty; to render a more nearly equal service from the office to our membership; to allow for a more economical routing of field service from the office staff; to give opportunity for contact between the office and a larger number of groups throughout the nation, a westward move is advisable.

Several cities in the midwest have been considered and information from these cities regarding transportation facilities, mail service and cost, temperature range, office availability, and general accessibility has been secured.

After deliberate consideration, the Executive Committee voted to transfer the office of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers to Chicago. The date of the removal and the new address of the National Office will be announced in the next issue of the CONGRESS BULLETIN.

• • •

Tune In and Find Out

WINGS FOR THE MARTINS

NBC Blue Network

Wednesday, 9:30-10:00 P.M., E.S.T. Presented by the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, the U. S. Office of Education, and the National Broadcasting Company.

February 1

PLANNING FOR COLLEGE

Is it possible for everyone to go to college? Is it wise for everyone to go? Should a student work his way through college? How can a boy or girl decide what college to attend? How can one get advice and facts about colleges?

February 8

"NO MORE MOVIES THIS MONTH!"

What do you know about motion pictures? What is a good picture? Would you like to know what your children learn from movies? How often should children go to the movies?

February 15

WHAT? NO NIGHT WORK?

Time was when dad had to work hard to get the correct answer to Sonny's arithmetic problem. Would mothers prefer to hear the children "recite" rather than help them with their "night work?" Is "home work" different in families when the children go to a modern school?

February 22

PLACES TO LEARN OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL

Woods, fields, parks, museums, playgrounds, theaters, factories—what do children learn in these places? Hobbies, games, hikes, field trips, bird study, collecting, photography—are these part of children's educational experience?

Signposts and Guides

INTERPRETING THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS

"A CONGRESS parent-teacher association conforms to the fundamental policies stated in the National Bylaws which maintain . . . the nonpartisan character of the organization and provides a means for coordinating the interests, energies, and leadership of a community in an inclusive program . . . for civic welfare."

—FROM THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The word "nonpartisan" as used in the National Bylaws implies that the National Congress, its units, its officers, and its members as such, keep free from political partisanship. This word serves as a guidepost to direct parent-teacher civic and legislation activities away from the entanglements that would ensue from group or official action in regard to candidates and partisan measures. Such action might become a controversial issue as the membership of the association is made up of parents, teachers, and other interested citizens with wide diversities of political opinions and political affiliations.

The Congress and its units are interested (1) in the "art and science of government" in order that their support of adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth shall be in accordance with procedures necessary to secure such laws, (2) in the study and discussion of pending legislation in order that their support will be based upon thoughtful consideration of all proposed measures. Questions which arise constantly include:

Question—Can local associations or councils endorse candidates for the school board?

Answer—The endorsement of an individual candidate necessarily implies a partisan action which the parent-teacher group could not take. The parent-teacher association should know and discuss the principles involved in the election; should urge the development of an informed public opinion; and should work with persistent effort to get every member of the association to vote at the election.

Question—Can an officer or a member of a committee of a parent-teacher association run for a political position?

Answer—If an officer or a member of a committee of a parent-teacher association consents to run for a political position, he should resign his office in order to carry out the spirit of the policies which have been necessarily made in the Congress.

Question—How may the parent-teacher association assist in disseminating information concerning election issues?

Answer—In the case of elections, the association may cooperate with other groups in calling a mass meeting of interested citizens for the purpose of explaining the issues involved in the election. The various aspects of the situation should be presented by those who are best qualified to explain them. A statement of the principles involved in the election should be formulated and should be given wide publicity. Parent-teacher members thus have an opportunity to accept civic responsibilities as members of a civic group.

• • •

The coordination of the interests, energies, and leadership of a community, without group adherence to political party or faction, makes it possible for the people of the community to acquire a thorough knowledge of laws affecting their interests; to see that these laws are enforced or wisely administered; to study needs and insure that they are met; and to cooperate with other communities in solving common problems.

Parent-teacher members should have access to the facts which will help to give them a thorough understanding of the principles involved in social and civic matters. The members should thoroughly study and discuss the necessity for the practise of citizenship in the home, the school, and the community. Parents, teachers, and all citizens need to accept the responsibilities of citizenship.

The parent-teacher association brings together community interests, energies, and leadership. It makes possible an educational program on the underlying principles involved in securing needed legislation for protective and constructive measures. Legislative measures of paramount interest to parent-teacher associations include: provision for adequate library and recreational facilities; improvement in school conditions; supervision of dance halls and roadhouses; removal of gambling devices in the neighborhood of schools; abolishment of the sale of salacious literature; registration of guests at tourists camps; care of migratory children; desirable safety laws; public health services.

The parent-teacher organization in the United States is a nationwide organization of citizens working together for the promotion of the welfare of children and youth and at the same time adhering to a nonpartisan policy. The strength of the organization lies in strict adherence to that policy.

About Publications

•

Children's Reading—Picture Story Books; First Friends; Magic Carpet; Animals, Big and Little; Things That Go—these are the fascinating captions of a list of books prepared for the beginner in the first section of the new pamphlet, *Children's Reading.*

Equally intriguing are the titles for the second age-level group—Romance and Enchantment; With Seven League Boots; Neighbors Here and There; Patriots and Pioneers; Nature Lore.

Then there are treasures of fancy and fact for youth under such headings as Home and School Adventure; Armchair Trips; Sky Trailing; Cavalcade of History; Album of the Great; Epic of America; Modern Miracles.

To select the right book for the right child from the 500 titles will be a genuine pleasure for the parent or the teacher who wishes to give to growing boys and girls a rich and satisfying experience.

This special cover pamphlet (price, 10c per copy) may be ordered through the state office or from the National Office.

Parent-Teacher News

MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITIES REPORTED BY LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

Enrolment of Members

THE MEMBERSHIP enrolment of one unit was planned early in the school year by members of the executive committee, room mothers, council representatives, and delegates who had attended recent state and district meetings.

A careful plan was set up with provisions for direct personal contacts made through a house to house canvass. Every member of the association was asked to act as a committee of one to bring in at least one new member.

Special publicity was used throughout membership enrolment week, including radio talks, announcements at civic and public meetings, stickers on windows. The publicity committee centered its efforts during this period upon acquainting the community with the real meaning of parent-teacher work, informing the public about the association plans for the year, and giving intensive publicity to the advantages to the community in having a strong association.

Reaching Prospective Members

PERSONAL INVITATIONS to prospective members proved to be the most effective means of enrolling new members in one association. A house to house canvass was made by representatives of the membership committee and the room representatives. The school district was divided up into six divisions and the homes within each were apportioned to various members for personal calls. Each prospective member was given a copy of the objects of the association and a copy of the program for the coming year. It was explained to the persons interviewed that the association based its activities on problems of immediate concern to the parents of the community.

National Congress Bulletin

Volume 6
Number 6

Published monthly except July and August by the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, 1201 16th St., N. W., Washington, D. C.
Editorial Committee: Mrs. Charles D. Center, Mrs. Fred M. Raymond, Mrs. M. D. Wilkinson.
Subscription price: 20 cents a year.

Entered as second class matter July 26, 1936, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., additional entry at Baltimore, Md., under act of March 3, 1879.

Using the Telephone

A TELEPHONE squad was organized by one membership committee at the beginning of the year for the purpose of contacting every member and prospective member in advance of each meeting, in order to stimulate attendance. Members were able to take part in this activity who could not leave home to engage in other association activities.

About Publications

Plateprints—One way to develop an understanding and participating membership is to give to each member a printed message on some subject of interest. The 27 plateprints now available may be considered under three headings:

1. Committee subject plateprints providing study helps, additional information, or detailed suggestions:

Alcohol and Narcotics—A Bibliography
Children's Reading
International Relations
Kindergartens
Mental Hygiene (a bibliography)
Mothersingers
Parent-Teacher Chorus
Physical Education
Your State and Library Service

2. Informational plateprints for inspiration, consultation, and reference:

Goals
Local Unit Package
The National Nickel
Objects
Parent-Teacher Creeds (2)
Parent-Teacher Prayer
Speak to Us of Children
What Parent-Teacher Membership Means
Why a Congress P.T.A.

3. Promotional plateprints giving definite information concerning materials that can be purchased—their use and cost, and how to secure them:

Companion Books
Directed Study Courses
Emblems
Founders Day
National Parent-Teacher
Our Homes Study Outlines
Our Public Schools Study Outlines
Youth in a Modern Community

Plateprints may be secured through the state office, or ordered directly from the National Office if the name of the local association is given. They are priced at 100, 50c; 1,000, $3.50.

Cataloging the Interests of Members

A CARD catalog of the special interests of all members was kept by one association. At the first meeting of the year cards were distributed for those present to fill out. Each person was asked to give his name, address, and telephone number, as well as comments on the phases of parent-teacher work in which he was especially interested. This information was used in assigning members to the various committees, as well as by the program, membership, and hospitality committees.

Providing News Briefs

AS A MEANS of promoting P.T.A. membership, the membership and publicity committees of one local association compiled a collection of short statements about parent-teacher work for the use of the editor of the local newspaper. These fillers were used generously throughout the paper during membership enrolment week.

Distributing Membership Envelops

ONE ASSOCIATION simplified the work of collecting membership dues by inaugurating the plan of mailing to parents an envelop for the return of the annual dues. The envelop carried an invitation to join, the amount of membership dues, and spaces for the names of both the father and mother. The envelops were returned directly to the association, some parents bringing them to meetings, others mailing them to the person designated. Excellent response was secured from the parents by the use of this device.

Stimulating Membership Participation

AS A MEANS of stimulating the participation of members in discussion programs, one association follows this plan for its meetings. It meets as a group for assembly singing and the business session. The chairman presents the general topic under consideration, and the meeting is then divided into four or five sections to discuss various phases of the topic for half an hour. Following this, the entire group meets together to hear summarizers from each section. This plan has proved an excellent means of providing for participation by a large number of members.

Our National Magazine

PREVIEW OF THE FEBRUARY ISSUE

ON this page last month was recorded the fact that the NATIONAL PARENT-TEACHER has represented the National Congress of Parents and Teachers for 33 years. This month the Congress celebrates its 43rd anniversary, and it is only fitting that its official organ, which covers parent-teacher thought and action, should dedicate the February issue to those who, possessing a vision, had the courage and foresight to translate that vision into the parent-teacher movement.

● *A special feature, made up of brief expressions by outstanding educators and citizens of our democracy, which points out the unique responsibilities and opportunities of the parent-teacher organization, is presented in this issue.*

● ● ●

"Self-realization," says Dr. George D. Stoddard, "is such a fat word that we must be careful to give it a foot-on-the-ground reality." And that is exactly what Dr. Stoddard does in his fresh and clear analysis of the attributes of self-realization for an educated person. This is the first article in the series of four articles based on the Educational Policies Commission book, *The Purposes of Education in American Democracy*, a book that has been eagerly received by parents and teachers all over the country. **Education for Self-Realization** is an excellent article for study group use.

● ● ●

If fifteen-year-old George seeks the corner drugstore "gang" each evening and doesn't come in until all hours of the night and morning, will it do any good to forbid him to go out evenings? What can parents do? It is difficult to imag a parent or teacher of adolescent c dren not interested in the problem **Adolescent Companionship.** Edith Sunderlin handles this subject with wisdom and clear understanding of both the adult's and adolescent's viewpoint, presenting practical knowledge in plain and simple language.

● ● ●

No brief review can do more than hint at the content of the parent-teacher study course article this month. Perhaps all that should be said is that every citizen who feels any responsibility for "good government" and who desires to "vote intelligently" should not miss Forest Frank's article **Whose Quarrels Are These?** And even if you are like Mandy in the article who says, "I always votes fo de right man, an de right man only," you'll enjoy this easy, conversationally-written discussion of political freedom.

Here is a theme—**Learning for Civilized Living**—which is rarely presented yet urgently needed by every parent and every teacher. "How can a child know what is best for him? How can he decide things for himself?" Grace Langdon briefly and pointedly supplies the answer, an answer upon which depend democratic ways of living, and the triumph of a continuously progressing civilization.

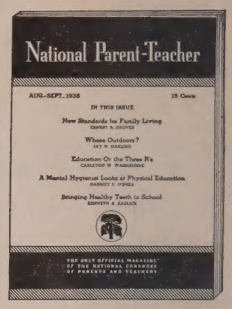
● ● ●

Josephine Roche sets forth clearly in her article **Society Redeems Its Pledge** the need for action on human welfare measures. This need becomes even more acute as social and economic waste is considered in relation to our greatest national asset—the children and youth of today. Miss Roche brings an informative and inspirational discussion to all interested in the well-being and security of children and youth.

● ● ●

Other articles and features: **"Teachable Moments" in Health Education** is discussed by Jay B. Nash who destroys many old health dogmas and presents a new approach to the teaching of health habits. That young people need individualized guidance is the subject of Luther T. Purdom's article **No One Can Win Alone** . . . The February issue also includes an editorial, the sixth article on the Guiding Principles, and the President's Message.

Let's unite our efforts and make February, 1939, a month when every member of each of the 27,000 local parent-teacher associations of the National Congress will be offered an opportunity to subscribe to the official magazine of the Congress—the *National Parent-Teacher.*


National Parent-Teacher
AUG.-SEPT., 1938
15 Cents
IN THIS ISSUE
New Standards for Family Living
Where Outdoors?
Education Or the Three R's
A Mental Hygienist Looks at Physical Education
Keeping Healthy Teeth in School
THE ONLY OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS

AS A LOCAL PRESIDENT

I Tell the Members

ABOUT THE NATIONAL PARENT-TEACHER

Because

● The *National Parent-Teacher* is published to help carry out the purpose for which the National Congress of Parents and Teachers was founded—to promote the welfare and education of children and youth.

Today parents, teachers, and other adults are eagerly considering their responsibilities. They want to know how the home and the school can cooperate in teaching and training children to become happy, well-adjusted members of society.

Before we can attack our problems on a community basis and take intelligent action as a group, we must continue to secure wider and more accurate understanding about child development, parent education, and community living. To make this possible the *National Parent-Teacher* magazine puts the findings of experts in these fields at our disposal. It enables us to bridge the gap between theory and practise. The knowledge gained by reading it, helps us to plan more effective and interesting programs and study courses to challenge the thinking of our members and others who meet with us.

As president I believe it is my responsibility to try to discover ways to extend its circulation and therefore its field of service.

I check myself from time to time to see whether or not I score 100, giving myself 25 for answering in the affirmative each of the following questions:

1. Do I call attention to the Magazine at our meetings?
2. Do I discuss its use with the Program chairman and with other chairmen?
3. Do I encourage our Magazine chairman in her efforts to let all members know we have a magazine?
4. Do I let the Magazine and Publications chairmen see the summaries of articles which are published each month in the NATIONAL CONGRESS BULLETIN?